



## FIFTY-FIFTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE AUTHORITY OF ECOWAS HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT

29<sup>th</sup> June 2019, Abuja, Nigeria

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### FINAL COMMUNIQUE

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1. The Fifty-fifth Ordinary Session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was held on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2019 in Abuja, Federal Republic of Nigeria, under the chairmanship of H.E. **Muhammadu Buhari**, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Chairman of the Authority.
2. Present at the Summit were the following Heads of State and Government or their duly mandated representatives:
  - H.E. **Patrice Guillaume Athanase Talon**, President of the Republic of Benin;
  - H. E. **Roch Marc Christian Kabore**, President of Burkina Faso;
  - H. E. **Alassane Ouattara**, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire;
  - H. E. **Adama Barrow**, President of the Republic of The Gambia;
  - H. E. **Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo**, President of the Republic of Ghana;
  - H. E. **Alpha Conde**, President of the Republic of Guinea;
  - H. E. **José Mário Vaz**, President of the Republic of Guinea Bissau;
  - H.E. **George Manneh Weah**, President of the Republic of Liberia;
  - H.E. **Ibrahim Boubacar Keita**, President of the Republic of Mali;
  - H. E. **Issoufou Mahamadou**, President of the Republic of Niger;

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H. E. **Muhammadu Buhari**, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria;

H. E. **Julius Maada Bio**, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone;

H. E. **Faure Essozimna Gnassingbe**, President of the Togolese Republic.

Mr. **Julio Cesar Herbert Duarte Lopes**, Minister of Regional Integration, Republic of Cabo Verde;

Mr. **Amadou Ba**, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Senegalese Abroad Republic of Senegal;

3. The session was also attended by:

- H.E. Jean-Claude Kassi Brou, President of the ECOWAS Commission;
- Dr Mohamed Ibn Chambas, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS);
- His Lordship Judge Chile Eboe-Osuji, President of International Criminal Court;
- Mr Abdallah Boureima, President of the Commission of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA).

4. At the opening ceremony, statements were delivered by His Excellency, **Muhammadu Buhari**, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Jean-Claude Kassi Brou, President of the ECOWAS Commission, Dr Mohammed Ibn Chambas, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) and His Lordship Judge Chile Eboe-Osuji, President of International Criminal Court.

5. The Heads of State and Government took note of the 2019 Interim Report of the President of the Commission, the reports of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers and the 42<sup>nd</sup> Ordinary Meeting of the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council presented by the Chairperson of Council.

6. The Authority expressed satisfaction at the quality of the reports presented and the relevance of the recommendations made therein, which will facilitate consolidation of the achievements of integration obtained in the past four decades.

7. While building on the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons which is being celebrated in 2019, the Authority is determined to spare no effort in its bid to actualise the vision of the Founding Fathers.



8. The Heads of State and Government express their renewed and firm belief in the values and founding principles of ECOWAS, and their total commitment to achieving the free movement of persons and goods, establishing a common market, consolidating peace, security and good governance, as well as attaining greater efficiency in the operations of Community institutions through the implementation of adequate reforms.

### **ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF REGIONAL INTEGRATION PROGRAMMES**

9. The Authority expresses its satisfaction with the economic performance of the region, with growth increasing to 3.1 percent in 2018, up from 2.4 percent in 2017 and a projection of 3.4 percent for 2019, thank to improved commodity prices and increased agricultural output and investment in infrastructure.
10. This performance notwithstanding, the Authority encourages Member States to pursue appropriate policies and structural reforms that will sustain accelerated growth, structural transformation of their economies and make them more resilient to exogenous shocks.

### **CREATION OF THE ECOWAS MONETARY UNION**

11. The Authority congratulates the Ministerial Committee on the Single Currency for the considerable progress recorded in the implementation of the revised roadmap, particularly as concerns the exchange rate regime, monetary policy, the model of the common Central Bank and the name of the single currency. The Authority reaffirms the gradual approach to the creation of the single currency, with an emphasis on starting with the Member States that respect the convergence criteria.
12. The Authority adopts the flexible exchange rate regime together with a monetary policy framework centred on inflation targeting and the federal system for the Common Central Bank. "ECO" was also adopted as the name of the ECOWAS single currency.
13. The Authority instructs the Commission to work in collaboration with West African Monetary Agency (WAMA), West African Monetary Institute (WAMI) and the Central Banks to accelerate implementation of the revised roadmap, with particular regard to the symbol of the single currency which will be presented at its next ordinary session.
14. The Authority takes note of the 2018 macroeconomic convergence report. It notes the worsening of macroeconomic convergence and urges Member States to do more to improve on their performance, in view of the imminent deadline for the establishment of a monetary union.

15. The Authority instructs the ECOWAS Commission and Central Banks to accelerate operationalization of the Special Fund for financing of programmes in the revised Roadmap for the ECOWAS Single Currency Programme. It further directs the Commission to ensure implementation of the recommendations of the meeting of the Ministerial Committee on the ECOWAS Single Currency Programme held in Abidjan on 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> June 2019, as well as preparation and implementation of the Communication Strategy for the single currency programme.

### **SECTORAL POLICIES**

16. The Heads of State and Government reiterates the importance of effective implementation of the different sectoral strategies and policies adopted at national and regional levels, to deepen the integration process.

#### **Free Movement of Goods and Persons**

17. The Authority takes note of the continuing difficulties encountered in the implementation of the Protocol on Free Movement of Goods and Persons. The Authority also commends the efforts of the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme (ETLS) Presidential Task Force in removing the barriers to free movement of goods and persons and calls on Member States to implement the revised Supplementary Act on Community Rules of Origin by removing both tariff and non-tariff barriers.
18. The Authority reiterates the need for all Member States to implement the Protocol on Free Movement as it relates to the right of entry, residence and establishment. It calls upon Member States to speed up implementation of the ECOWAS National Biometric Identity Card to facilitate mobility and enhance the security architecture of the region. The Summit also encourages the Commission to accelerate the operationalisation of the ECOWAS Visa (ECOVISA) in order to boost tourism in the region.

#### **Agricultural Development**

19. The Authority notes with satisfaction the increase in food production within the region during the last crop season. It however requests the relevant Community Agencies to redouble their efforts towards increasing food reserves, and also reducing the number of Community citizens in need of adequate food and nutrition. In this regard, the Authority commends the Commission and Member States for sustaining the ECOWAS Regional Food Reserve and donating to communities in need.



### **Energy, Mines and Infrastructure**

20. The Authority welcomes the goal of increased regional electricity generation and completion of related projects by the West African Power Pool.
21. The Authority endorses the Supplementary Act on the ECOWAS Mining Code and its Implementation Strategy aimed at ensuring that affected populations and communities benefit from revenues accruing from mining operations.
22. The Summit also welcomes the strides being made in the development of joint border posts within the region. It further encourages the Commission to sustain its resource mobilisation efforts towards the completion of the remaining joint border posts.
23. The Authority welcomes the significant progress in the implementation of the Abidjan-Lagos and Praia-Abidjan Corridor projects. It notes with satisfaction the steps taken for the establishment of the **Abidjan-Lagos Corridor Management Authority (ALCoMA)**, which will be responsible for the construction, management and operation of the Abidjan-Lagos Highway on behalf of the five Member States of the Corridor.
24. The Chairperson of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government will begin consultations with his Colleagues in the corridor countries (Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Togo) in order to consider and select a host country.

### **Mobile Telecommunications within ECOWAS**

25. The Authority expresses satisfaction at the significant progress in the implementation of Regulation C/REG.21/12/17 on roaming on public mobile communications networks within ECOWAS. In this regard, the Authority lauds Member States which have initiated activities expected to lead to the implementation of the Regulation and urges them to continue implementation of the action plan. The Authority encourages Member States yet to commence implementation of the action plan, to take necessary steps to fastrack efforts to this end.

### **Tourism**

26. With regard to tourism development within ECOWAS, the Authority adopts the ECOWAS Regional Tourism Policy (ECOTOUR) and its 2019 – 2029 Action Plan.
27. The ECOWAS Regional Tourism Policy seeks to position ECOWAS as an attractive and competitive tourism destination. In line with the revised Treaty, the general objective of the regional tourism policy is to ensure the harmonious and viable development of tourism, in order to create employment for young people, increase private sector participation through the development of prosperous and sustainable companies, thereby contributing to the economic development of the Community.



### **Social and Human Development**

28. The Authority endorses the ECOWAS 2019-2030 Child Policy and Strategic Plan of Action, the ECOWAS Roadmap on Prevention and Response to Child Marriage and the ECOWAS Political Declaration and Common Position against Child Marriage.
29. The Authority also welcomes the proposed preparation of the ECOWAS Human Capital Strategy for the West Africa Region and calls on the ECOWAS Commission and WAHO to mobilise resources for its implementation. It commits to participate in the High Level Dialogue on Human Capital in September/October 2019 in the margins of the UN General Assembly meetings. Finally, it endorses the establishment of the ECOWAS Heads of State and Government and First Ladies Platform on investing in nutrition and its alignment with other initiatives.
30. The Authority presents the 2018 ECOWAS Prize for Excellence to three eminent Community citizens, namely:
  - Dr Kofi Annan of Ghana as the posthumous winner of the **Honorary Award for Distinguished Personalities**, for his immense contributions to achievement of the objectives of ECOWAS in the areas of Security, Peace and Socio-economic Development;
  - Dr Ameyo Adadevoh of Nigeria as the posthumous winner of the **Award for Deserving Citizens of the Community**, for her sacrifice and selflessness to the Community, during the outbreak of the Ebola Virus Disease;
  - Mrs Germaine Acogny of Senegal as the winner of the **Arts and Literature Award**, for the quality and richness of her artistic production recognised in several ECOWAS Member States, contribution to the training of West African youth in choreography and the wide dissemination of her work in her country, the region and the world.
31. The Authority congratulates the recipients and enjoins Community citizens to strive for excellence in their various fields of endeavour.

### **PEACE, SECURITY AND STABILITY**

32. The Authority reaffirms its commitment to the promotion of peace, security and stability in the region as a prerequisite for regional economic integration and development.
33. The Authority expresses concern over the spread of terrorist attacks in the region and the growing link between terrorism, organised crime and inter-community clashes, including transhumance-related clashes. The Authority firmly condemns terrorist attacks and the inter-community violence in the region and expresses solidarity with affected countries and populations

34. The Authority welcomes the Joint Operational Cooperation known as the "Accra Initiative" between Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Niger and Togo to combat terrorism and the outcome of the meeting of the Heads of State held in Accra, Ghana on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2019.
35. The Authority also welcomes efforts being made by individual Member States at the national level, particularly by allocating considerable financial resources to prevent and combat terrorism, which however increase their level of indebtedness. In this regard, the Authority instructs the President of the ECOWAS Commission to facilitate a dialogue with international financial institutions and development partners such that security spending is seen as investment for development.
36. The Authority underlines the need to strengthen direct exchange of information and intelligence among Member States for the effective fight against terrorism in the region. In this regard, the Authority instructs the ECOWAS Commission to take appropriate measures to ensure regular meetings of the relevant security services fighting against terrorism. It reiterates its commitment to the implementation of the West Africa Police Information System (WAPIS) Programme and urges Member States to fulfil their respective obligations in order to speed up the implementation of the Programme. The Authority further instructs the ECOWAS Commission, in collaboration with the Ministers in charge of Security to continue the follow up of this Programme in order to ensure the commencement of the implementation of the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) component in all the Member States.
37. The Authority decides to hold, in Burkina Faso and at a date to be confirmed, an Extraordinary Summit on terrorism, to review the different initiatives taken so far and redefine the priority intervention areas for the containment of the spread of terrorist attacks in the region.
38. On peace support operations missions, the Authority commends the tremendous contributions of the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea Bissau (ECOMIB) and the ECOWAS Mission in The Gambia (ECOMIG) in the stabilization of the two Member States, despite the various challenges been encountered. The Authority also commends the troop and police contributing countries for sustained efforts towards the peace and security in the region and expresses its gratitude to the European Union for its technical and financial support to ECOMIB and ECOMIG. The Authority finally decides to extend the respective mandate of ECOMIB and ECOMIG for a period of six (6) months from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 in order to sustain the gains made so far and adequately face the fragile political and security situations in Guinea Bissau and The Gambia.

### **On the political situation in Guinea Bissau**

39. The Authority commends the successful conduct of the legislative elections on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2019 after several postponements. The Authority takes note of the assessment of the situation made by the High-level Ministerial Committee further to its visit to Bissau on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2019, which aimed at the resolution of the political impasse after the legislative elections.
40. The Authority welcomes the issuance of a decree by H.E. Jose Mario Vaz, President of the Republic of Guinea Bissau, fixing the date of the presidential election for 24<sup>th</sup> November 2019. It also welcomes the issuance of a Presidential Decree with the appointment of Mr Aristides Gomes, as the new Prime Minister. The Authority instructs that a new government be put in place by 3<sup>th</sup> July, 2019.
41. Taking into account the current situation linked to the end of the term of the President of the Republic on 23 June 2019 and the absence of a government, and on the basis of the consensus reached by the political stakeholders, the following decisions have been taken:
  - The President to sign the decree of nomination of the government before 3<sup>th</sup> July, 2019, on the basis of the proposition made by the Prime Minister;
  - the government will amongst other things engage in the preparation of the presidential election to be held on 24 November 2019;
  - A new Attorney General will be nominated on the basis of consensus before 3 July 2019;
  - The President will stay in Office until the next presidential elections while government affairs shall be fully conducted by the newly-formed government in line with the Guinea Bissau Constitution.

### **On the political situation in Togo**

42. The Authority welcomes the unanimous adoption of the revision of the Constitution by Togolese Deputies on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2019 , which provides, among others, for limitation of the term limits for the President of the Republic to five years renewable once and the limitation of the mandate of the Togolese deputies to 6 years renewable twice.
43. The Authority commends the Togolese Government for the effective implementation of the ECOWAS roadmap issued at the 53<sup>rd</sup> Ordinary Session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2018, in Lomé, Togo, leading to the resolution of the political crisis.
44. The Authority takes note with satisfaction the upcoming municipal elections on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019 with effective participation of the opposition and urges all the stakeholders to ensure peaceful elections in order to deepen democracy in Togo.



### **On the political situation in Benin**

45. The Authority expresses concern over the post-electoral crises that led to certain acts of violence in Benin emanating from the lack of a consensus on the implementation of the electoral reforms.
46. The Authority reiterates its firm condemnation of acts of electoral violence and reaffirms that all grievances linked to the elections should be addressed in a lawful and peaceful manner.
47. The Authority welcomes the appeal made by H.E. Patrice Talon, President of the Republic of Benin, for the review of the Political Charter and the Electoral Code in order to align them with the realities of the country, thus, creating a conducive environment for dialogue with the opposition. The Authority requested the Commission to remain engaged in Benin to that effect.

### **On the political situation in Mali**

48. The Authority notes with satisfaction the improvement in the socio-political environment in Mali, following the governance agreement between the Government and the political and social stakeholders, which led to the formation of an inclusive government. It also notes the significant progress in the implementation of the peace and reconciliation agreement in Mali.
49. The Authority commends H.E. Muhammadu Buhari, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for efforts undertaken through several missions of good offices to Mali to facilitate dialogue among the stakeholders. The Authority also commends H.E. Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, President of the Republic of Mali, for progress made in Mali on the political front and calls on all stakeholders to adhere to the inclusive national political dialogue towards the adoption of the political and institutional reforms.
50. The Authority is pleased to note the renewal of MINUSMA's mandate and urges it to take the appropriate steps to end the violence and protect civilians. It extends support to the Malian government's initiatives, including the appointment of a high representative of the President for the Centre, and calls on the international community to back resource mobilisation efforts.
51. The Authority reiterates its strong commitment to the unity, territorial integrity and sovereignty of Mali.



### **On Elections in the region**

52. The Authority commends the successful and peaceful conduct of presidential elections in Nigeria and Senegal on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> February 2019 respectively. To this end, the Summit congratulates H.E. Muhammadu Buhari, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and H.E. Macky Sall, President of Republic of Senegal for their re-election and wishes them successful tenure.

### **INSTITUTIONAL MATTERS**

53. The Authority reiterates its previous decisions on the strict implementation of the Community Levy (CL) by all Member States and further urges the Commission to engage Member States with a view to improve the rate of collection.
54. The Summit notes the progress made in the implementation of the Institutional Reforms and calls on Community Institutions to complete the outstanding steps particularly the review of Community Acts affected by the Institutional Reform.

### **On international cooperation**

55. The Authority welcomes the ongoing discussions with the African Union on enhancing the working relationship between the African Union, RECs and Member States through an efficient division of labour, in conformity with the principles of subsidiarity and complementarity enshrined in the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community (AEC).
56. The Authority endorsed the Republic of Ghana's bid to host the Headquarters of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Secretariat and urges all Member States to support this bid.

### **ELECTION OF THE NEW CHAIRMAN OF THE AUTHORITY**

57. The Heads of State and Government elect His Excellency Issoufou Mahamadou, President of the Republic of Niger, as Chair of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government for a one-year term.



**DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT SUMMIT**

58. The next ordinary session of the Authority will hold in Abuja on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2019.
59. The Authority conveys its sincere congratulations to **H. E. Muhammadu Buhari**, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, for his unwavering commitment to regional integration and exemplary leadership in steering the affairs of the Community.

**DONE IN ABUJA THIS 29<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF JUNE 2019**

**THE AUTHORITY**





## **FIFTY-FIFTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ECOWAS AUTHORITY OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT**

Abuja, Federal Republic of Nigeria, 29<sup>th</sup> June 2019

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### **VOTE OF THANKS**

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We, Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States, meeting in Abuja, on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2019 at our 55<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session, express our deep appreciation to H. E. **Muhammadu Buhari**, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the people of Nigeria for the warm hospitality extended to us in truly African fashion and for the excellent facilities placed at our disposal to ensure the success of our Summit.

We also wish to thank him for his commitment to peace, security and good governance and for his remarkable leadership in steering the affairs of our Community. We pay him a well-deserved tribute for his contribution, as Chairman of the Authority, to deepening the integration process in West Africa.

We, Heads of State and Government, express our highest regard to President **Muhammadu Buhari**, for the skill and effectiveness with which he presided over our proceedings, thus significantly contributing to the formulation of appropriate decisions for the deepening of the integration process.

We are also grateful to him for the cordial atmosphere in which our deliberations were held.

**DONE IN ABUJA THIS 29<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF JUNE 2019**

**THE AUTHORITY**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JPH', is located in the bottom right corner of the page.